



NEWS RELEASE

Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests & Thunder Basin National Grassland

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Forest Service conducting thinning in the Esterbrook Campground

(Douglas, Wyo.) May 18, 2010 – In a measure aimed at curtailing the impact of the mountain pine beetle epidemic, the Forest Service is planning to accomplish extensive thinning within the Esterbrook Campground this spring. Research has shown that thinning is one of the more effective means of preventing the epidemic from infesting a stand of trees.

The Esterbrook Campground is in the Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests, which is administered by the Douglas Ranger District.

While stands of trees in this campground have not been infested at the epidemic scale common in southern Wyoming and Colorado, surveys revealed a small pocket of beetle-infested trees that will be removed. This part of the project is considered sanitation, which is the removal of trees that show signs of beetle infestation.

Esterbrook Campground is scheduled to be open for Memorial Day weekend. The project is approximately one-third complete. Any work that is not completed prior to the campground's opening will be completed only when the campground is unoccupied and is not expected to result in temporary closures.

The Forest Service apologizes for any mess that visitors might encounter. The public is invited to enter the campground to collect the down trees for personal firewood use. A firewood collection permit is required and may be purchased at the Douglas Ranger District office.

Visitors may encounter the sanitation removal of trees within other Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests campgrounds. Thinning is not planned in other campgrounds at this time.

In addition, visitors need to be aware that the mountain pine beetle epidemic has increased the risk of falling trees. Trees impacted by bark beetles appear red or have no needles. Remember to look up, look down, look around. Please be aware of your surroundings while visiting areas affected by the epidemic.

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